

Favorable consideration of this application, as presently amended, is respectfully requested.

By the present preliminary amendment a new Abstract believed to be in more proper format under United States practice is submitted.

Further, claim 13 is amended to no longer recite any multiple dependencies, and the subject matter of the canceled multiple dependencies is now set forth in new dependent claims 23 and 24.

The present application is believed to be in condition for a full and thorough examination on the merits. An early and favorable consideration of the present application is hereby respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

OBLON, SPIVAK, McCLELLAND, MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.

Gregory J. Maier Attorney of Record Registration No. 25,599

Surinder Sachar

Registration No. 34,423

Customer Number 22850

Tel: (703) 413-3000 Fax: (703) 413 -2220

(OSMMN 06/04)

SNS/rac

I:\ATTY\SNS\270486US-PR.DOC